

Gold Koran color transparencies

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Special Collections

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Summary Information

Repository: Special Collections

Title: Gold Koran color transparencies

Identifier: MS-0742

Date: 1999 - 1999

Physical Description: 0.42 Cubic Feet (2 cardfile boxes (12.5 x 6.5 x 4.5 inches))

Overview

The pages of what is known as the "Gold Koran", which were photographed to create this collection of at least 430 color transparencies, were originally part of a unique manuscript of the Qur'an. Created from photographing the sides of each page of the partial illuminated manuscript, these transparencies measure 4x5". The original complete manuscript was written in around 800, while this portion was bound in possibly the 18th century and later photographed for the transparencies in 1999.

Conditions Governing Access

This collection is housed off-site and requires 48-hours' notice for retrieval. Please contact Special Collections for more information.

Collection is open for use.

Scope and Contents

This collection includes at least 430 photographic color transparencies of pages of the Gold Koran. Created from photographing the sides of each page of the partial illuminated manuscript, these transparencies measure 4x5". The portion of the Gold Koran is a vellum bifolio, written in Kufic script in gold leaf, and outlined with black ink. Vocalizations are indicated by red and blue dots. Each folio is framed by decorative border containing intricate interlace patterns, and features a decorative leafy vignette in the outer margin. It was likely bound in the 18th century.

The text is as follows and contains 18 suras, or chapters, only approximately half of the completed religious text:

- Folio 1a LII Sura al-Tur (the Mount), verses 37-49
- Folio 1b LIII Sura al-Najm (the Star), verses 1-21
- Folio 2a LIV Sura al-Qamar (the Moon), verses 13-27
- Folio 2b LIV Sura al-Qamar (the Moon), verses 27-40.

The original complete manuscript was written in around 800, while this portion was bound in possibly the 18th century and later photographed for the transparencies in 1999.

Biographical / Historical

The pages of what is known as the "Gold Koran", which were photographed to create this collection of color transparencies, were originally part of a unique manuscript of the Qur'an. This particular text was approximately written around the year 800. Also called the "Golden Koran" during its history, the complete manuscript was originally housed in the Nurosmeniye Mosque Library in Istanbul. In 1999, Johns Hopkins University conveyed to the government of the Republic of Turkey the university's portion of the Gold Koran, and it was reunited at the Nurosmeniye Mosque Library with the remainder of the manuscript, which was separately bound.

Immediate Source of Acquisition

This item was donated to the John Work Garrett Library in a bequest of rarebooks in 1942 by John Work Garrett after his death.

Processing Information

This collection was processed in January 2016 by Annie Tang.

Custodial History

The partial manuscript of the Gold Koran was removed from the Nurosmeniye Mosque Library in Istanbul, which occurred at an unknown time between inventories taken in 1756 and 1951. The university acquired its portion of the Gold Koran in 1942 as part of a bequest of rare books. The partial manuscript owned by Johns Hopkins University was then returned to the Nurosmeniye Mosque Library, but transparencies of the item's pages were made before the return, and retained.

Related Materials

As of May 1993, other folios from the same manuscript were in the possession of a dealer in London, in the C.L. David Collection, Copenhagen, and in the Nasser D. Khalili Collection, London.

Conditions Governing Use

Single copies may be made for research purposes. Researchers are responsible for determining any copyright questions. It is not necessary to seek our permission as the owner of the physical work to publish or otherwise use public domain materials that we have made available for use, unless Johns Hopkins University holds the copyright.

Preferred Citation

[Name of folder or item], [Date], [Box number], [Folder number], [Collection title], [Collection number], Special Collections, The Johns Hopkins University.

Existence and Location of Copies

Digitized copies of the transparencies are available offline. Please contact Special Collections for more information.

Administrative Information

Publication Statement

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Controlled Access Headings

- Gold in art
- Islamic calligraphy
- Islamic illumination of books and manuscripts
- Manuscripts
- Manuscripts, Arabic
- Qurʾan
- color transparencies
- photographic transparencies
- transparencies